

second shape memory form shown in dotted lines in part B. In this second form it forms a non-zero angle with the plane of the plate 10 such that the blade 23 is lifted. When the arm 13 is cooled, it returns to the first memorised form and the blade 23 is again in the plane of the plate 10. In the form shown in FIG. 2, there is a single arm 13. Naturally there could be several arms 13, for example two arms obtained by a longitudinal recess of the arm 13 shown in FIG. 2, this recess going from the blade 23 to the continuum of the plate 10. The same applies to the embodiment described and shown in FIG. 2, where the arm 13 changes form by flexion. The arm 13 can also change its form by torsion. In this case the blade 23 is mobile by rotation about the axis BB. Naturally the arm 13 can also change form by torsion and flexion, giving the blade a shift by two degrees of freedom. In this case and according to the place where the arm 13 is heated, three positions for the blade 23 could be obtained, a first position corresponding to a single flexion, a second position corresponding to a single torsion and finally, a third position corresponding at the same time to torsion, and flexion of the arm 13.

[0051] The shape memory material will be for example nickel-titanium or a copper alloy shape memory material, for example, CuZnAl or CuAlNi or CuAlBe.

[0052] The form of the element 25 shown in FIG. 2 is applicable also when the invention is made with a plate 10 consisting of two sub-layers or sub-plates 11, 12. In this case the heating of the part 21 causes deformation of the arm 13, causing, as explained earlier, curving and/or torsion of the latter and lifting of the blade 23, as shown in part B. In part B this second alternative has been shown by the fact that the element 25 shown in section is formed by two sub-plates 11, 12 whereof the plane of delimitation is shown by a dotted line.

[0053] In the embodiment shown in FIG. 3, the shape memory material making up the plate 10 is a one-way material. The blade 23 is connected to the continuum of the plate by first 13 and second 15 arms. One, as shown in FIG. 3, or more first arms 13 have a first cold form and a second hot form. One or more second arms 15 undergo elastic deformation when the first arms 13 pass from their cold form to their memorised form. Due to this elastic deformation a return force is created which contributes to returning the blade 23 to its first form when it is cooled.

[0054] According to a variant of this first embodiment an element 25 of the plate 10 has in a plan view the form above mentioned in relation to FIG. 2. In this variant the plate is formed from two sub-plates 16, 17 assembled on one another for example by welding or bonding, so as to form a single plate, as shown in FIG. 4. A first sub-plate 16 is made of a shape memory material A. A second sub-plate 17 is made of an elastic material B. The material B can be for example spring steel or a copper-beryllium alloy or a harder material such as silicon used in microelectronics. In this configuration the arm 13 and the blade 23 having the form shown in FIG. 2 in a plan view are, similar to the rest of the plate, formed from two sub-plates 16, 17 superposed on one another. The arm 13 comprises two superposed parts 13a and 13b respectively. When a part for example 21 of the upper part 13a of the arm 13 of the first sub-plate made of material A is heated, it will cause deformation of this part by deformation of the material A, causing elastic deformation

of the part 13b of the arm 13 made of material B. When, due to the natural or active cooling of the material A, the material A is less rigid, the return of the material B to its initial form by elastic effect causes the materials A and B to return to the first form.

[0055] Therefore, in this embodiment and in its variant, modification elements 25 of the surface 10a of the plate 10 comprising the shape memory material, incorporating elastic elements 15, 13b mechanically connected on the one hand to the plate 10 and on the other hand to the modification element 25 to which they belong, these elastic elements exerting a return force on the modification element 25 of the surface of the plate 10 to take it from the second to the first form.

[0056] According to a third embodiment shown in FIG. 5 part A, the plate 10 is formed by two sub-plates 16, 19 assembled on one another for example by welding or bonding so as to form only a single plate 10. In the preferred form of this embodiment, the two sub-plates 16, 19 are adherent one to the upper face and the other to the lower face of an intermediate layer 18 made of a thermally insulating material. A first sub-plate 16 is made of a shape memory material A. A sub-plate 19 is made of a second shape memory material C having a memorised form different from the memorised form of the first. An exemplary embodiment of a modification element 25 is shown in a plan view in FIG. 5, part B. In this view, only a part 25a of the element 25 made in the upper sub-plate 16 is apparent. A blade 23a is obtained in the sub-plate 16 by means of two recesses 14, a first 14 having a U shape surrounding the blade 23a on three of its sides, and a second 14a having a form of a circle located substantially to the side of the open part of the U. The recess 14a in the form of a circle has a diameter less than the distance separating the two parallel arms of the U such that two arms 13a join the blade 23a to the rest of the continuum of the plate.

[0057] FIG. 5 part C shows a view from below of the element 25. In this view, only a part 25c of the element 25 made in the sub-plate 19 is apparent. A blade 23c is obtained by a recess 14 right around the blade, with the exception of a central arm 13c joining the blade 23c to the rest of the continuum of the plate. In FIG. 5 parts B and C two shaded parts a and c respectively are shown to which heating is applied for changing form.

[0058] The heating can be applied by any known means. It can also be applied by irradiation by a laser beam scanning the zone to be heated.

[0059] The assembly of the parts 25a and 25c is shown in a plan view in FIG. 5 part D. In this figure the sub-part 25a of a modification element 25 of the surface 10a of the plate 10 formed in the sub-plate 16 has its recessed part 14a present above the full sub-part 13c forming in the present case the arm 13c of the sub-part 25c of the other sub-plate 19. This arrangement is advantageous in the sense that a single scanning laser can be used to heat either the deformable part shown in FIG. 5 part B of the upper sub-part 16 or alternatively the deformable part 13c of the lower plate 19.

[0060] This operates as follows:

[0061] The part a of the sub-plate 16 made of material A for example is deformed by heating and regains its memorised form. This form is shown in a transversal section in